

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Wehrbein, then Senator Coords. n.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, I won't use a lot of time, but I thought it might be appropriate, I debated about putting an amendment on this to mandate seat belts at 65 also and use them, but I decided not to, but I wanted to use the opportunity to call the attention to the fact that safety should still be utmost. From my observation, I would expect 65 miles an hour to be observed and enforced strictly on the interstates now if we truly do add this 10 miles an hour limit. I think it is not only important to enforce the speed limit for what it is, but also to recognize that open violation of this law on a consistent basis also cheapens our law enforcement situation and contributes to neglect of really staying involved in these speed limits and obeying them. I...from my point of view I expect this to be enforced at 65 and not to be blinking their eyes at a higher speed limit. The other thing, I think it might be important to pull out that seat belt usage has dropped in the State of Nebraska. From October of '86 it's dropped from 62 percent usage down to February of '87 it's dropped to 42 percent. So many that said I don't mind using seat belts but I don't like to have it in the law, it really doesn't say that, because seat belt usage has dropped. And I think that the time is coming that we are going to have to look at this again. I know it was repealed by the voters last year. But I would hope that, as we increase our speed limit, that we do not see an increase in the death rate on the Nebraska interstate system. I realize that only 5 percent of the deaths do take place on the interstate, so our problems on the interstate, in terms of speed, are not as great as they might be. On the other hand, I would expect that our speed limit will be enforced in the urban areas and that we not make a sham of this raising our speed limit on the rural areas and not in the urban. It simply to make some observations because I still think we need to be vitally concerned about the safety on our highways. I would hope that we'll not take this increase in speed limit lightly.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Korshoj (sic), you are next, but may I introduce some guests first, in the north balcony, of Senator Korshoj. There are 30 seniors in the government class at the Ft. Calhoun Public School and their teachers. Would you folks please stand and be recognized by your Legislature. Thank you for visiting us today. Senator Korshoj, or no, excuse me, Senator Coordsen.